

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated July 22, 2009. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

By the above amendment, claim 16 is cancelled and claims 22, 24 and 25 are amended. Thus, claims 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 36, 37 and 38 are currently pending in the present application. Claim 37 is withdrawn from consideration but should now be entitled to consideration as will be evident below.

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On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Imamura (JP 2002-48188) in view of Gadd (U.S. Patent No. 2,764,136). As noted above, claim 16 is now cancelled, and therefore the rejection of claim 16 is now rendered moot.

Next, on page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates that claims 22, 24-27, 36 and 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 22, 24 and 25 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of base claim 16. Thus, claims 22, 24 and 25 are now clearly allowable. Note, the language of original claim 22 has been revised to provide “the member” with proper antecedent basis.

Claims 26, 36 and 38 depend, directly or indirectly from claim 24 and are therefore allowable at least by virtue of their dependencies. Similarly, claim 27 depends from allowable claim 25, and is therefore allowable.

Further, claim 37 (which has been withdrawn from consideration) depends from allowable claim 24, and therefore claim 37 should now be entitled to consideration, and such consideration is respectfully requested. Claim 37 is clearly allowable by virtue of its dependency.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to enter the above amendment and pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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